

Town of Concord

APP # 12
Annual Town Reports

The Law

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40: Section 49 charges the Board of Selectmen with the responsibility of the printing the annual Town Report. Section 49 states that the Selectmen, before the annual Town Meeting, shall at the expense of the Town print the annual Town Report for the use of the inhabitants. The Town Report is to contain the report of the Selectmen, the reports of the School Committees, financial statements of the Town, the reports of other officers and boards, and such other matters as the law, or the Town by vote or by-law, requires or as the Selectmen consider expedient. At the discretion of the Selectmen, the Report may also include material of Town-wide interest from selected non-Town organizations.

Policy

It is therefore the policy of the Town that, under the general direction of the Board of Selectmen, the Town Manager's Office shall coordinate the preparation of the annual Town Report. The Town Manager's Office shall arrange for the selection of an editor on a yearly basis. For the purposes of this policy, the "editor" may consist of one or more Town staff, a committee appointed by the Board of Selectmen, or a vendor contracted by the Town Manager. If the editor is to be an outside vendor, he or she will be selected in accordance with relevant procurement requirements.

Coordination

The editor shall be charged with the responsibility of gathering all content material for the Report. The editor shall work in coordination with the Town Manager's Office to provide ample, recurring notice to all relevant parties as to

proper submittals and relevant deadlines for submittal. All submittals MUST be in the form identified by the editor and Town Manager's Office. Any reporting party having difficulty in preparing the material in the proper format must notify the editor and cooperate in finding an acceptable solution to properly complete their report. All submitting parties MUST meet the deadlines for submittal.

Editing

While the content of the annual Town Report comes from many sources and is compiled by an editor who is specifically assigned that task, the Report itself remains the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen. Accordingly, whether the Report is compiled by Town staff, committee or contracted vendor, the Selectmen charge the Town Manager with assigning Town staff with editorial oversight of the material. While a contracted vendor may be assigned the general responsibility for preparing the layout of the Report and readying it for printing, the Town Manager's designee(s) shall have the authority to edit all sections of the Report for length, grammar, and appropriateness. At any point prior to being sent to the printer, the Town Manager and the Selectmen may also edit the Report for space, style and content as they deem appropriate.

The Board of Selectmen retains the responsibility for selecting the report cover photo from all available submittals.

Deadlines

While submittal dates will vary from year to year, the following deadlines shall be consistently applied to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for editing, printing and distribution prior to Town Meeting:

Early July	Reminder sent by TMO to all committees to be thinking about photos and other material
August	RFP prepared and advertised (If an outside vendor is to be retained for editing.)
September	Informational memo from editor distributed to all

	boards/committees and departments
November	Reminder memo from TMO to boards/committees and departments regarding Town Report deadline
December	Printer bid specs prepared and project put out to bid
December	Reminder memo from TMO to boards/committees and departments regarding Town Report deadline
Early January	Deadline for submittals of narrative material to editor
Mid January	Deadline for submittals of statistical data to editor
February	Deadline for final draft to be on clipboard for last review by BOS
February	Deadline for transmittal to printer
March	Town Report available at Annual Town Election

Content Guidelines

In addition to meeting the submittal requirements and deadlines outlined by the Town Manager's Office and the editor, the following guidelines will assist reporting parties in preparing appropriate content:

- Photo suggestions are encouraged. Committees should consider taking photos during the year of persons, places or events that might be candidates for inclusion in the Report.
- Reports should be clear and concise, yet long enough to include items of significance that were dealt with during the year.
- Objectivity and factuality should be the goals of all submittals.

Distribution: Board and Committee Chairs
 Staff Members Supporting Committees
 Department Heads